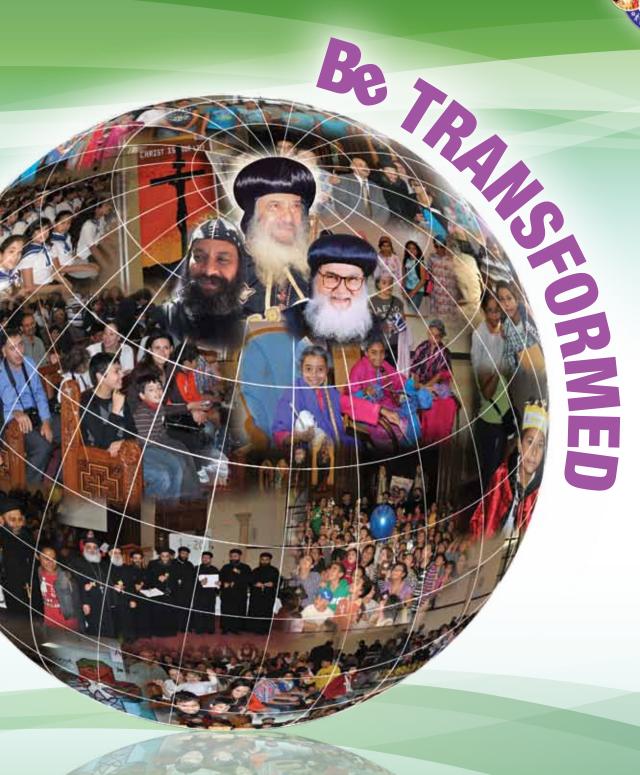
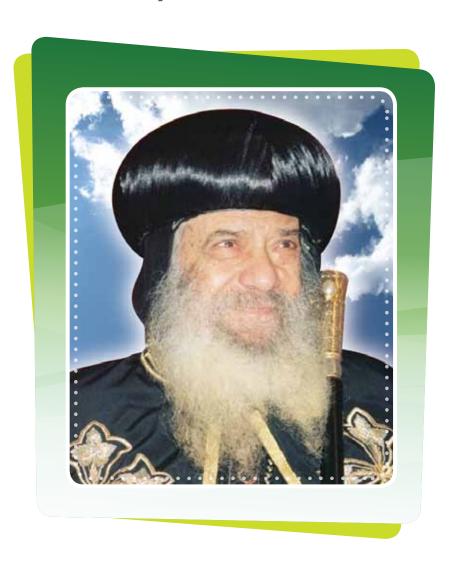
Mahragan Alkeraza 2012



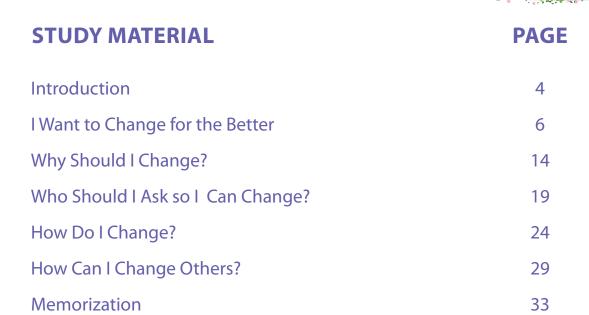


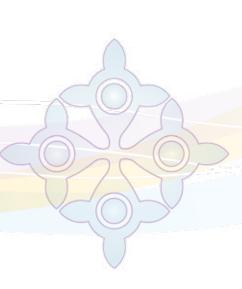
English Edition Gr. 1 - 2

H.H. Pope Shenouda III Pope of Alexandria











Mahragan Alkeraza 2012

As we celebrated the conclusion of last year's Mahragan with the distribution of the trophies for the first place winners, we are grateful for God's blessings. We were blessed in so many ways, as we experienced Christ as our life and our role model. We were also blessed with a worldwide participation, with over 140 Churches representing more than 20 countries in the 2011 Mahragan Competition.

The theme this year is "Be Transformed". To be truly transformed, we need to answer the following questions:

- 1. Do I want to be changed?
- 2. Why should I change?
- 3. Who should I ask so I can change?
- 4. How do I change?
- 5. How can I change others?

We hope all of you will participate in the Mahragan activities this year, and encourage everyone you know to join us in one of the greatest annual events, presented by our mother, the Coptic Orthodox Church.

May God bless the 2012 Mahragan and the efforts of all the participants and the coordinators of the Mahragan activities, through the prayers of our beloved father Pope Shenouda III.

Testival

Lisher Moussa

I WANT TO CHANGE FOR THE BETTER



The summer vacation is over and today is the first day of school. I've been so excited for this day to come so I can finally see my friends and make new friends. Oh! Sorry, I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Mira and I'm in grade one. This is my brother Tony and his friend George, and my best friend Marina. Today is our first day at Philopateer Christian School. After we sing the national anthem...

The Principal: Good morning everyone. Today is the first day of school and we're all very

excited. I would like to welcome our new grade ones and start off the year with a surprise. The school is pleased to announce the start of the music competition for grade 1 and 2.

This year, we'll be competing for the City Music Cup. If you want to register, please go to Mr. M in the music room. After recess, we'll have two periods for activities. Please sign up for the activity that you like. You have the choice between music, arts, sports and computers.

When we hear the announcement, we're happy because we like music and hymns. During recess, the four of us meet up and decide to participate in the music competition. We find the music room and meet with Mr. M.

George: Good morning Mr. M. My name is George and these are my friends Tony, Marina and Mira.

Mr. M: Good morning kids. How can I help you?

George: We heard about the music competition and we would like to sign up.

Mr. M: Welcome everyone.

Marina: Wow! Are all these musical instruments? I've never seen that many before.

George: Me too! I wanna play the guitar. Wait, why are all the instruments so dusty? It seems like no one is using them.





Mr. M: That's true. These instruments haven't been used for a long time. That's why I thought about the music competition so we can start using these instruments and encourage everyone to participate.



George: My friends at church always participate in Mahragan Alkeraza choir competition. They learn how to play different musical instruments.

Mira: I always wanted to learn how to play an instrument. Can you teach us how to use these instruments?

Mr. M: Of course! That's why I'm here. Feel free to pick any instrument you want. But there is a small problem...

Mira: What problem?

Mr. M: Well since these instruments haven't been used for a long time, some aren't working and need to be fixed. It's too much work for me to do by myself. Can you help me?

George: Of course! Just tell us what to do.

We're all very excited and start helping Mr. M clean and organize the room. All of a sudden, Mr. M starts coughing.

Marina: What's wrong Mr. M?

Mr. M: I'm sorry, all this dust makes me sick. When I was younger, I used to do this job all by myself, but now I can't.



Mira: Don't worry Mr. M. We're here to help you. Go get some rest, we'll clean the room and call you when we're done.



Mr. M leaves and we continue to organize the room.

Marina: Please come help me, this drum is too big! I can't move it by myself.

George: I'm coming. Wow, this drum is huge. Of course you can't lift it, I'm the only one who can because I'm the strongest.

Mira: Be careful, the drum is on the box that Mr. M told us not to touch.

George: Don't worry.

George doesn't listen. He tries to move the drum but he drops it because it's too heavy.

The Drum: Ouch! My head! Who dropped me?

Tony: Who's talking? Where is this sound coming from?

The Drum: I'm the poor drum that you just dropped. My head hurts.

George: What?! How are you speaking? That's really strange.

Mira: I told you not to move it.

Tony: Who are you?



The Drum: I'm an old drum and I've been here for a long time. I was happy to hear about the competition. Finally, someone will use me after the many years that I've been sitting here doing nothing.



George: I like you the most because you're the biggest out of all the instruments and your tone is the strongest.

The Drum: Are you saying that if I wasn't big and my tone wasn't strong, you wouldn't like to listen to me?

George: Well no, I know that the strongest always wins. Didn't you notice that I'm stronger than all my friends?

Marina: No, real strength isn't physical. Physical strength doesn't always win. This reminds me of Offero, who is also known as St. Christopher. He thought that his physical strength was most important but through his strong will and God's help, he was able to change and understand the real meaning of strength.



St. Christopher, the Christ-Bearer

Marina: Offero was a tall well-built strong man. He was one of the king's strongest guards and everyone was afraid of him. He was very proud of his physical power and strength. He didn't know anything about our Lord Jesus Christ. One day, Offero wondered who was the most powerful king in the whole world.

The Drum: Why was he looking for the most powerful king?

George: He probably wanted to fight him and win to become the most powerful king instead.



Marina: No, he was looking for the most powerful king so he can work for him and protect him. He found a king that everyone said was the most powerful and decided to serve him and become his personal guard. But when this king was defeated in a war, Offero was very upset that he was serving a weak king so he started to search again for a new master.

He found another king and served him, but when this king was also defeated, Offero started to realize that real power isn't in physical strength. The





defeated king finally told him about the strongest King who is always victorious.

Mira: Who was this King?

Marina: Offero learned that this King is the King of Kings, our Lord Jesus Christ. So he kept looking and asking about Him.

God guided him to an old monk who was living in a small prayer room in a monastery. Offero asked him about our Lord Jesus, the King of Kings. The monk spoke to Offero about Jesus and explained to him that He is the King of Kings because He created the whole world and all that is in it. He told him how much Jesus loves us all and hears our prayers. He told him everything about the Christian faith.

From that day he decided to serve this King forever. He asked the monk how he can serve Jesus and make Him happy. The monk thought about it for a while and told him: "See the river over there? There are no boats to help people cross to the other side because of the strong winds. But since you are a big strong man, you can carry the people and take them to the other side of the river."

Mira: Did he accept?

Marina: Offero was very happy with this idea. He told the monk that he is willing to offer this service. Quickly, he went and built for himself a cabin beside the river and lived there. He used a huge rod to help carry the people across the river. While he was carrying the people, he spoke to them about our Lord Jesus and was very happy to serve the Lord in this way. One night, the weather was very cold and the wind was so strong. Offero heard the voice of a small child asking him, "Come and carry me to the other side of the river". He went out of his cabin to find out who was calling him in the middle of the night in this cold weather. He didn't find anyone. He thought he was dreaming and went back to sleep. Again, he heard the same voice but he couldn't find anyone. The third time, he went out to the river and found a small child asking for help to cross the river. Even though the weather was very cold and windy, and it was too dangerous to cross the river, Offero was very courageous and decided to carry the little boy. He walked in the cold water and carried the little boy on his shoulders. As he was carrying him, the child got heavier and heavier. Offero was very









surprised how such a small child could be so heavy. Do you know who this child was?

The kids: Who was it?

Marina: It was our Lord Jesus. He told him: "From now on your name will be 'Christopher' because you carried Christ. I am Jesus Christ your King and as a sign, plant this rod that is in your hand and it will bring forth fruit."

Tony: Does that mean that Christopher means Christ-bearer?

Marina: That's right. Christopher then

hurried and planted his rod beside the door of his cabin and went to sleep. The next day, he found that it had become a big tree. He continued helping the people and serving them. He was so happy that our Lord Jesus blessed him with such a huge blessing. That's how Offero changed. He understood that the power is not in physical strength but real power is in kindness and service.

George: So true power means to love everyone and use my power and strength to help them?

Marina: Very good George, you got it. Don't forget that it's God who gave you your physical power. And remember the verse that says:





-MEMORY VERSE

"That the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Corinthians 4:7

George: You're right Marina. Now I know why I'll use the drum.

The Drum: Why?

George: To be able to help our school win the competition.



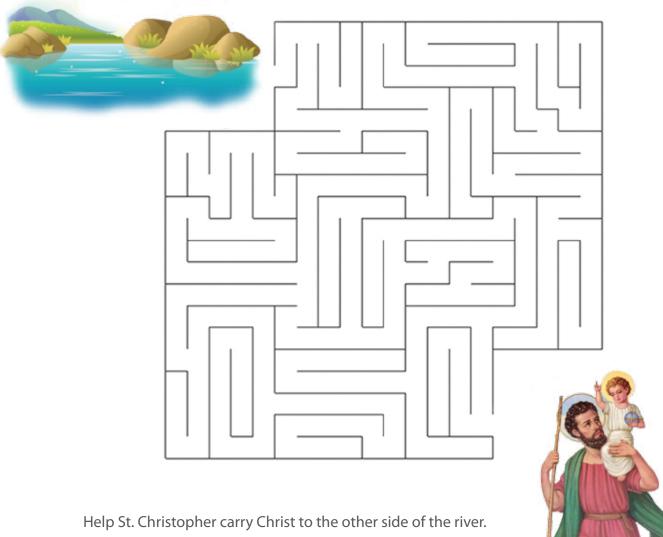
St. Christopher





Carrying Christ







After we hear the story of St. Christopher, we understand that the real meaning of power is to help other. We see how St. Christopher, with his strong will and God's help, was able to change his way of thinking. We all go back to finish organizing the music room.



Marina: Let's continue cleaning, Mr. M is waiting for us.

George: Look what I found in this box!

Mira: Didn't Mr. M say not to touch that?

The Drum: Don't worry Mira, I asked George to open the box. My friends in the box are dusty and need cleaning too.

George: Even if Mr. M gets upset, I'll apologize to him. I'll also tell him that it was the Drum who told me to.

Mira: Fine, as long as you tell Mr. M. What did you find?

George: Is that a trumpet? I don't know.

Tony: Show me.

Tony blows in the trumpet.

Marina: Stop Tony, you're blowing all the dust in my face!

George: And it sounds terrible. I don't think it works; it's full of holes.

The Flute: First of all, I'm a flute not a trumpet. Do you think my voice is bad?

Mira: Oh! You can speak too? And yes, your voice is a little harsh.







Tony: That's easy. I'll help you get back your beautiful voice.

Tony gets a piece of cloth and starts cleaning the flute. Finally, it sounds better.

The Flute: Thank you so much my friends. After you took all the dust away, I feel changed and my voice is so much better.

Tony: This reminds me of someone who used to be very bad. People used to be afraid of him and didn't like him, but he was able to change and become a new person. Because God asked him, he obeyed God's word and he changed his life.

George: Who was it? Tell us his story.

The Repentance of Paul of Tarsus

(Acts 9:1-19)

Tony: It's Saul of Tarsus. He had two names: Saul and Paul. He was a Jew who lived in a city called Tarsus. People in this city didn't know anything about God because they were Gentiles. His parents sent him to Jerusalem to learn about the Jewish religion. He was taught by Gamaliel, a very famous Jewish teacher.

Mira: If he learned from great teachers, why was he doing bad things?

Tony: Saul was persecuting the Christians because he thought they were not worshiping the true God. He thought that by doing this, he was serving God. He persecuted Christians to the point that he went to Damascus to arrest them and bring them to Jerusalem to be judged. He asked the High Priests to give him letters in order to do that. God knew that Saul's heart was full of love and that he needed some guidance. That's why God took care of him.









Marina: How? What did God do?

Tony: God helped Saul by showing him how to

love and serve Him.

When Saul was on his way to Damascus, something really strange happened to him. Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell off his horse to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting Me?"

Saul replied, "Who are you Lord?" and the voice answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do."





"Lord what do You want me to do" Acts 9:6

Marina: God is so good and merciful. Although Saul was persecuting His children, He appeared to him and showed him the right way.

Tony: That's right. When Saul saw our Lord and heard His voice, he obeyed Him and he changed.

Mira: What do you mean by changed?



Tony: The first thing he did was ask God for guidance. He was ready to obey, but wanted God to tell him what he should do. That's why Jesus told him to go to the city and there he will be told what God wants him to do.

Because of the strong light, Saul was blinded. The people led him by hand and brought him into Damascus where he stayed for three days without eating or drinking. In a vision, he saw a man named Ananias place his hands on him and restore his sight.



Tony: Ananias was one of Jesus' disciples who lived in Damascus. Our Lord Jesus appeared to Ananias in a dream and told him where Saul was and what to do with him. At that time, Ananias was afraid of Saul because he knew that he persecuted the Christians. But God reassured him and told him that He chose Saul to witness for Him and preach His name to the whole world. So Ananias went to Saul as Jesus asked him to. As soon as Ananias prayed for Saul, something like scales fell from his eyes and immediately he was able to see again. Afterwards, Ananias baptized Saul and introduced him to the believers in Damascus. From then, Saul



all the teachings he received from Gamaliel, he was able to preach in many places and everyone loved him and listened to him. St. Paul wrote 14 Epistles in the New Testament. Many people knew Jesus and became Christians because of him. He travelled to many cities, preaching and honouring God's name. Our Church calls him "the Apostle of the Gentiles" and "the Philosopher of Christianity".

George: Preaching? How did people listen to him if they were afraid of him?

Tony: When Saul listened to God's words and was baptized, he changed from someone who hated Christians to someone who loved Christ and talked about Him to everyone. Because of God's work in him, and









WHO SHOULD I ASK SO I

As soon as Tony finishes the story of St. Paul, we all start to work again to finish cleaning the instruments. While we're working, Marina asks for help. She wants to bring the guitar down to clean it. It's my first time seeing a guitar. George and Marina start to fight over it.

George: Let go Marina, I'll play first. I was the one who helped you bring it down.

Marina: No, me first! I saw it first and wanted to clean it. I kept it until...





Suddenly the guitar cords snap.

George: See what you did! Wouldn't it have been better if you had let me play with it first? Now it's ruined!

Marina: It's your fault, you pulled it hard!

Mira: What should we do now?

George: I have an idea. Instead of fighting about it, let's go tell Mr. M what happened. We have to apologize to him and I'm sure he'll forgive us.

Mira: I agree. We need this guitar for our training and it needs to be fixed.

Marina: No, I won't tell Mr. M. I'm sure I can fix it all by myself.

Marina starts to pull the cords, but she can't fix the guitar. She tries many times but every time it gets worse.

George: Are you going to do this for long? Do you still think you can fix it by yourself? You made it worse.

Marina: I know what I'm doing. I'm not gonna ask Mr. M. I don't need anyone's advice. I'm not a little kid anymore.



Tony: But this isn't right Marina! We have to tell Mr. M. He's an adult and he knows more than us. It's great that you tried to fix it but it doesn't seem to be working. It's not wrong to ask when we don't know.

talking, we hear Mr. M coming. We all hide behind Marina who's holding the guitar in her hand. We're very embarrassed and don't know what to say.

Mr. M: Marina, why are you standing like that? Who brought this guitar down? It seems that you guys did something wrong.

George: I'll tell you the truth Mr. M.

George tells Mr. M everything that happened.

Mr. M: But why didn't you ask me to fix it?

Mira: Marina was afraid to tell you. She thought she could fix it by herself.

Mr. M: Marina, you should've asked. It's not wrong to ask when you don't know. We always need to take advice from people older than us. Our Bible teaches us that:



This means that it's always better to consult others. Let me tell you the story of someone whose life was completely changed when she asked for advice.

Elisha's Advice to the Widow

(2 Kings 4)

Mr. M: A long time ago, there was a poor widow who had two







The widow: Elisha, God's prophet, my husband died and he had many debts. He borrowed some money from a man and didn't have time to pay him, back. Now this man wants to take my two sons to be his slaves.

Elisha: Tell me, what do you have in your house?

The widow: I have nothing but a small jar of oil.

Elisha: Listen carefully and do what I tell you. Borrow from your neighbours as many empty jars as you can. Go home, shut your door behind you, then pour the oil you have in the empty jars.

The widow did as she was told. What Elisha asked her to do was very strange and didn't make much sense. She couldn't understand how such little oil could fill all these jars, but she had faith and trusted Elisha. Finally, when all the jars were full, the oil ceased.

Marina: What did she do with all that oil?

Mr. M: She went back to Elisha and asked him "My Lord Elisha. I did all what you asked me to do, all the jars are full. What do I do now?" Elisha replied, "Go sell the oil and pay your debts, and you and your sons live on the rest." See how when the widow asked Elisha, her life changed for the better? That's why it's important to ask for the advice of older people when we have problems.

Marina: You're right Mr. M. From now on, whenever I have a problem that I don't know how to solve, I'll ask. Can you please help me fix this guitar?

Mr. M: Very good Marina. I'm glad that you learned how to ask for help to solve your problems. Come with me, I'll show you how to fix it.





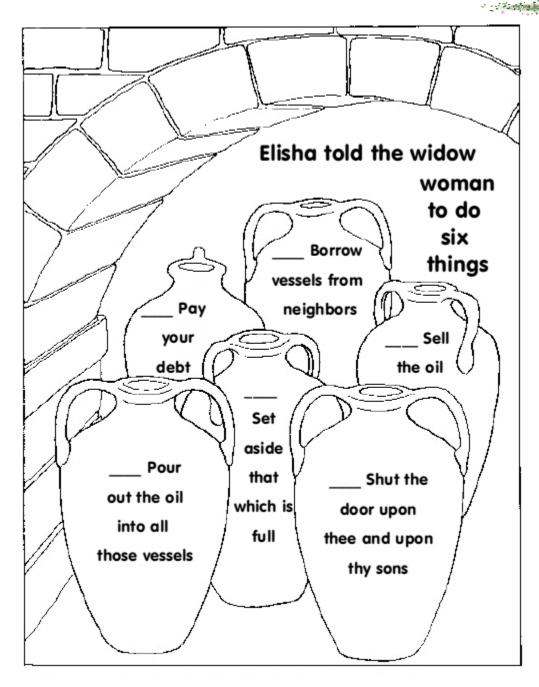








Elisha's Advice



Write numbers 1 - 6 in the blanks to put the instructions in order.

HOW DO I CHANGE?

After Mr. M fixes the guitar and puts it back in its place, we continue cleaning the music room.

Mira: Come guys, look what I found!

Tony: Oh! It's a book. What does it say?

Marina: Give it to me, I know how to read.

She takes the book and tries to read it, but she can't.

Mira: Let me try, I might be able to read it. Is it Arabic or

English?

Mr. M: It's not Arabic or English, it's a book of musical notes.

George: Wait, I don't understand. There are special notes for music?

Mr. M: Absolutely, the musical notes help us to play instruments.

Mira: So all these symbols and drawings make up a musical language?

Mr. M: Yes, just like you have to know the alphabet in order to read, you have to know the musical notes in order to play instruments.

Mr. M starts to play the flute.

Mr. M: This is the musical alphabet: Doe...Rae...Mi...Fa...So...La...Ti... I'll help you and teach you how to use these notes to play the different instruments. This reminds me of how Achilla and Pricilla helped Apollos.

George: Who are they? Can you tell us their story?





(Acts 18: 24-28)



Apollos was a Jew born in Alexandria. At that time, Alexandria was one of the greatest cities in the whole world. Apollos studied the Old Testament and other religious books and was very knowledgeable in Jewish teachings. He was very well known for his style of teaching and preaching and he travelled everywhere to teach people about God's way. He knew about the baptism of John, who baptized people asking them to repent from their sins, but he didn't know anything about Christ.

Tony: So he didn't know that Jesus took flesh and was born of St. Mary; that He was crucified and died for us because He loved us; and that He rose from the dead

on the third day? How did he not know that?



Mr. M: Maybe because he was travelling a lot, he never had the chance. But in every place he went, he taught people about God from the Old Testament up to the baptism of John.

Marina: Why didn't anyone tell him about Jesus Christ?

Mr. M: That's exactly what happened! One day, he was in Ephesus teaching the people in the Synagogue and preaching with power and enthusiasm. His sermons were amazing and more and more people listened to him everyday. Among those people who listened to him were Achilla and Priscilla. They liked Jesus and knew everything about His incarnation and redemption. Achilla and Priscilla loved the way Apollos was preaching and all his Biblical knowledge, but they realized from all his sermons that he didn't know anything about Jesus. They decided to help him know Jesus so





Marina: How did they help him?

Mira: They taught him everything about our Lord Jesus Christ, like His teachings, His miracles, and His work. He listened to them in all humility and rejoiced in what he learned about Jesus.

Marina: Wow! Even though he was a great teacher as you mentioned, he still accepted to be taught from others and his life changed for the better.

Mr. M: Apollos wasn't just happy to know about Christ, but he wanted to talk about Him to everyone he met. He went to a city called Achaia to talk to the people about Jesus. Achilla and Priscilla helped him get to the church there and introduced him to the disciples. So he preached about Jesus, about His love for us and His redemption, and many believed in Christ because of his teachings.

While we're still talking, the bell rings. We leave but promise Mr. M that we'll continue cleaning the music room again tomorrow.





We take our bags and get on the school bus. We tell all our friends about what we saw in the music room and they're surprised to find out that all these instruments are in such an old room. We start encouraging our friends to participate with us in the competition and the year-end presentation, so many of them agree and decide to help us clean the room. The next day during recess, we all meet in the music room.



The kids: We would like to participate in the music competition.

Mr. M: Wow! I've been here for years and no one ever wanted to take part in the music activities. What changed your minds?

Mira: I'll tell you what happened. On our way home yesterday, we encouraged our friends to join us and participate in the competition. We told them about all the beautiful instruments that we saw.



Marina: We also told them that you would let us choose the instrument that we want to play.

George: And that you will teach us how to use them.

Mira: So they all became very excited and wanted to participate.

Mr. M: I'm very proud of you! You knew how to change their minds. You were all very thoughtful and wanted to learn something new and you wanted your friends to benefit as well.



So Mr. M takes us to the school principal and asks him to recognize us in front of all the students. After we leave the room...



The Accordion: I was so happy because they convinced their friends to participate in the competition. Do you remember the musical we did with Mr. M when we first moved here?

All Instruments: Oh yes! "King Josiah"!

The Accordion: Yeah! All these kids remind me of King Josiah.

The Guitar: That's right; he was young but was able to change many things around him for the better.

The Drum: I wasn't there. Can you tell me the story?

The Accordion: Sure!

King Josiah

(2 Kings 22 & 2 Chronicles 33-34)

The Guitar: Josiah was the son of King Amon from the kingdom of Judah. His grandfather was King Manasseh.

The Accordion: King Amon was a bad king and didn't follow God's commandments. His grandfather, King Manasseh was bad too but repented and returned to God at the end of his life.

The Flute: Josiah grew in the fear of God as his mother Jedidah taught him.

The Guitar: After the death of Amon, Josiah became the king. He was only 8 years old when he reigned. During his reign, he prayed to God









asking Him to help him follow His commandments and change all the bad things around him. Hilkiah, the High Priest, helped him and guided him.

The Flute: When Josiah grew up he decided to change everything around him. He ordered his soldiers to demolish all the idols that the people used to worship in his kingdom and the surrounding cities.



The Accordion: He also started to renovate the temple and rebuild the parts that the previous kings had demolished because they didn't follow God and did what was evil in His sight.

Because Josiah wanted to make changes for the better, God helped him as the verse says:

MEMORYVERSE

"When you eat the labor of your hands, you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you." Psalms 128: 2



While they were renovating the temple, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of Moses that was lost years ago. Josiah was very happy that they found it.

The Flute: When he heard the words of the Law, he was very upset because the people were sinning and were far from God. He wept and asked God to forgive them all. He gathered all the people in the temple and read the Book of Law to them. Afterwards, they decided to change and walk in the way of God and follow His Law and not worship idols any more.







The next day at school, the principal calls our names and tells everyone about how we were able to change ourselves and our friends around us. Everyone gives us a round of applause and encourages us to keep up our good work.

Many students participate in the music competition, so Mr. M buys a few new instruments. Our parents and our friends attend the year-end celebration and are very proud of us. We're all very happy and we understand the importance of change in our life as the verse says:



MEMORY VERSE

"Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" Romans 12:2









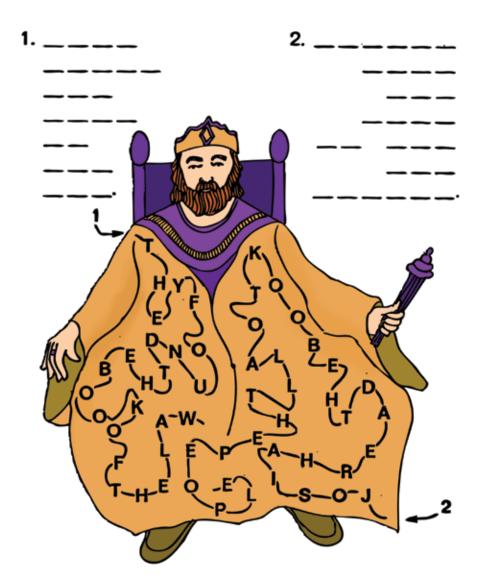


King Josiah said, "We must obey these laws." And the people did. Josiah loved God, and God blessed him.



What happened when King Josiah ordered the temple to be cleaned?

Follow the maze of letters.

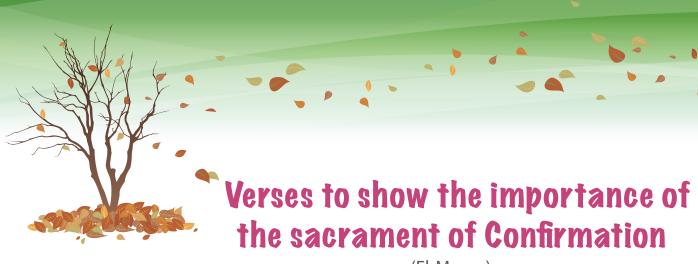




Psalm 130

(129 in the agpeya)

Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD; Lord, hear my voice! Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in His word I do hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning—Yes, more than those who watch for the morning. O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Alleluia



(El-Myron)

- 1. In the early church it was through laying of hands
 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.
 Acts 8:17
- 2. It takes place right after the sacrament of baptism When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. Matthew 3:16
- 3. 36 anointments with Myron oil to sanctify the body
 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all
 things. 1 John 2:20
- 4. Also called confirmation.

 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you. 1 John 2: 27



Hymns & Tasbeha

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